

Record of the Interview with Ms Haley Akmed

Interviewee and position: Ms Haley Akmed, Head of ICT at XXX International School
Date of the Interview: May 4, 2009

What problem(s) does do you face in your position as Head of ICT?

The school rules are seriously out-of-date and have not been updated in two years. They are also written in formal language and are not very student-friendly. What I mean is that students do not really understand the rules as they are written or the consequences if they break the rules.

Do you know of any examples of students breaking the rules that had serious consequences?

Yes, recently a grade 8 student brought a memory stick to school with a sniffing program on it. He downloaded the software from the internet and was “curious” if it would capture other students’ and teachers’ password access to the school server. Fortunately, one of the librarians discovered the student trying to install the program on one of the computers in the library. We also have a serious problem with students copying information and photos from the Internet and not citing sources. These kinds of incidents have made me aware that we have to review and update our school rules.

How could an IT solution solve the problem?

Grade 8 is an important age where students do not realize that there are “evils” on the internet or they are trying out hacking software. I would like to create a grade 8 project where all of the students have to collaboratively research “digital citizenship” and present their findings. The students could then create new school rules in “kid-speak” so that all of the students would understand them.

The grade 8 students could work in teams to collect and analyze the information that they find and create new school rules. The students could also work in teams to create the school rules and related PowerPoint Presentations that would be shown at student assemblies.

Do you have any ideas ?

I have an idea how this could be organized, but actually do not have time to setup the website. It is important that the students can post their information from home and also in school. Using the school server or email would not work. We have tried this in the past, so we have to use another solution that allows collaboration. Ms Marlene Davis, one of the history teachers, has used Wikispaces for a collaborative project with her students. It seemed to work very well.

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I went to visit Ms Davis, grade 7 history teacher, who had organized a collaborative project with her students using Wikispaces. This seemed to be the kind of solution that Ms Akmed requires and I decided to go back and discuss it with her.

A summary from talking to Mrs. Akmed

For the digital citizenship product, we could use Wikispaces or PBwiki for the grade 8 students to use for their research and to present their findings. We could make the URL available to other students and the school community so that they can follow the development.

Each team could be given a digital citizenship topic to research. A set of school rules could be written from the results. All of the research could also be summarized in one PowerPoint presentation that could be shown at assemblies in both Middle School and Upper School explaining “digital citizenship”.

For the Primary School we could have a modified version of the PowerPoint Presentation and modify the graphics to appeal to younger children. In the younger grades in the Primary School the class teacher could show the PowerPoint presentation and discuss the rules with the children. The presentation could also be shown to the older children in one of their assemblies. At the moment there would be only two versions of the PowerPoint templates.

The rules and the various consequences would be written in language suitable for the two age levels. These would be included both on the wiki and also in the PowerPoint presentations. We have to make certain that one person from each of the digital citizenship teams is working on the overall rules and PowerPoint presentations. I told Ms Akmed that I would figure this out, but I need the names of all of the students in grade 8. She agreed to get these for me.

Ms Akmed seems happy with the wiki solution and has given me the OK to go ahead with planning the wiki website. She also wants me to stay in close contact with her as I plan and make the solution. Ms Akmed sees a big advantage to using the Wikispaces to collect the information. All of the students from the various teams can see the work being posted on the wiki as it is happening. It is also available to the entire school community as it is being developed and when it is finished.

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A transcript of an interview and a summary of a meeting were used to support criterion A and criterion B. Formulating good questions for an interview with the client is important for these two criteria.